

Office of Emergency Preparedness

Avoyelles Parish

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August 4, 2003

ORIGINAL

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: In the matter of improving Public Safety Communications in the 800 MHz Band:
WT Docket No. 02-55 (Ex Parte)

Dear Madam Secretary:

The Avoyelles Parish Office of Emergency Preparedness is writing to express its opposition to Nextel's so-called "Consensus Plan" and to urge the FCC to adopt the "Balanced Approach", which was filed on May 29, 2003. As discussed below in greater detail, we believe that the Consensus Plan will jeopardize Public Safety communication systems. Instead, the FCC should adopt a solution, such as the Balanced Approach, that does not require Public Safety licenses to relocate and does not reduce their interference protection.

We are concerned that the Consensus Plan's relocation process is extremely complicated and there is no guarantee that Public Safety licensees will be able to continually operate their communications systems during this process. Furthermore, it is unrealistic to expect all Public Safety licensees to relocate in 12 months or less given the complexity of some Public Safety systems.

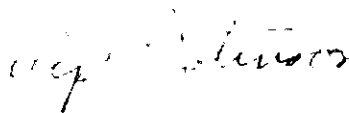
Also, Public Safety licensees could be subject to more interference because the Consensus Plan protects Public Safety licensees only if they meet certain signal strength and receiver requirements. They will have to expend significant resources to ensure that they are protected from interference. Further, the interference situation could be worse if rebanding is not completed before Nextel's funding runs out.

Therefore, the Avoyelles Parish Office of Emergency Preparedness supports the Balanced Approach, which is superior to the Consensus Plan because it takes pro-active steps to immediately deal with Public Safety interference by relying on technical solutions and increased enforcement. As a result, this proposal is less disruptive and less expensive than the Consensus Plan so Public Safety communications will not be jeopardized. For all the reasons above, the

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Avoyelles Parish Office of Emergency Preparedness urges the FCC to adopt the Balanced Approach.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chip Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized script.

Chip Johnson - Director